

Tuesday, July 10, 2012

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico’s Third District and Ranking Member on the Indian and Alaska Native Affairs Subcommittee spoke on the House floor today in opposition to Republican legislation to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Below are his remarks as prepared.

“Mr. Speaker, this Republican majority’s effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act is bad legislation that would undermine significant advancements to the delivery of health care services to all Americans.

“But let me be clear: this bill would repeal the single most important federal law that governs delivery of health care to the First Americans – Native Americans. It is an assault to our federal responsibility to tribal communities who, without the Indian health care system, would not have meaningful access to health services.

“The Republican majority swept the rug out from under Native American women when they took them out of the act to protect women from domestic violence.

“This act the Republicans have put before us would hurt people in a very serious way. The Affordable Care Act makes possible long-awaited improvements to the Indian health care delivery system by providing authority to: provide cancer screenings and dialysis as well as hospice and elder care, recruit more qualified health professionals, modernize dated health facilities, and establish comprehensive behavioral health initiatives, with a particular focus on the Indian youth suicide crisis.

“Mr. Speaker, we need to reject this plan to repeal health care reform. We need to reject this effort by Republicans, which is causing harm to Native Americans across America.”

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